

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

231344Z Feb 04

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000314

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR SDELISI, LAROIAN, MRAYNOR
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JFRAZER, DTEITELBAUM
LONDON FOR CGURNEY
PARIS FOR CNEARY
NAIROBI FOR TPFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/22/2009

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: BOMB REPORTEDLY DEFUSED AT JUSTICE MINISTER'S
OFFICE

Classified By: Political Officer Win Dayton under Section 1.5(b)(d)

[11.](#) (C) An Embassy FSN whose family is close to the family of Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa reported on February 22 that, according to Chinamasa's secretary, an unidentified woman delivered a suspicious package to the Minister's office last week. In the course of opening the package, the secretary discovered that it contained an apparent bomb and

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summoned the police. A police bomb squad removed that package and reportedly defused it. Chinamasa was visiting Zambia at the time and the incident has not been reported publicly. The FSN, whose family sees Chinamasa regularly, noted that he had increasingly been voicing concern about the security of his position and the level of the President's confidence in him in recent months. He reportedly had received threats from senior party officials during his tenure as attorney general years ago in connection with prosecutions he had considered pursuing against party members, but was not known to have received threats of late.

[12.](#) (C) COMMENT: With the recent arrests of party stalwarts Philip Chiyangwa and James Makamba, fear and loathing within the ruling party is on the upswing and Chinamasa is probably not alone in his professional anxiety. Word of this latest development will likely fuel paranoia and paralysis within the party. It is unclear how the purported attack could affect Chinamasa's enthusiasm as ruling party point person in interparty talks on talks.

[13.](#) (C) COMMENT (CONT'D): There are no obvious suspects or motives for sending the bomb, and Chinamasa seems an unlikely target. Often identified as a hard-liner for his orchestration of the ruling party's legislative strategies and legal campaign against the MDC and its members, the Justice Minister is probably more of a pragmatic careerist. He lacks a meaningful popular constituency and does not pose an overt political threat to those within the party. He is one of the more austere cabinet ministers, generally eschewing the business empire-building of many in favor of politicking and farming on his farm(s), at least one of which predated fast track land reform. Aggressive and publicity-seeking earlier in his tenure as Justice Minister, Chinamasa has kept a relatively low profile during the last six months.

SULLIVAN